United Nations S/2011/548

Security Council

Distr.: General
30 August 2011

Original: English

Letter dated 29 August 2011 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to convey the report on the international security presence in Kosovo, covering the period from 1 April to 30 June 2011 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

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Annex

Report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the Kosovo Force (KFOR) reporting requirement under United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). The report covers the period from 1 April to 30 June 2011.

2. As at 30 June 2011, the total number of KFOR troops in theatre stood at 5,951, including 1,115 troops from non-NATO countries.

Security situation and operations

3. The situation in Kosovo remained generally calm throughout the reporting period, during which KFOR continued operations to maintain a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement. Two multinational battle groups are now conducting highly mobile, intelligence-driven operations with flexible, strong reserves capable of deterring violence and responding to crisis situations in Kosovo, and with five joint regional detachments providing situational awareness. KFOR conducted operations as a third responder in northern Kosovo in support of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) and the Kosovo Police.

4. On 7 April 2011, the Chief of General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Miletić, visited KFOR Commander Major General Bühler to attend a regular high-level meeting of the Joint Implementation Commission. During the reporting period, another high-level meeting of the Joint Implementation Commission took place on 21 June 2011 in Kapaonik.

5. On 26 April 2011 and following a prior North Atlantic Council decision on the issue, KFOR released an order concerning the handover of guarding tasks at the Holy Archangel Monastery from KFOR troops to Kosovo Police. The transition phase for this handover commenced on 26 April 2011 and was successfully completed on 10 May 2011. That day, KFOR handed over full responsibility for the protection of the monastery to the Kosovo Police.

6. The joint KFOR/EULEX exercise "Balkan Hawk" took place at the end of June 2011. The Kosovo Security Force (KSF) was also invited to participate in the exercise, employing its core capabilities, such as demining, clearance of hazardous material, search and rescue and firefighting.

7. From 24 to 29 May 2011, the German and Austrian troops of the Operational Reserve Force battalion conducted an operational rehearsal in the KFOR area of operations as part of their preparation prior to assuming their Operational Reserve Force battalion responsibility. The aim of this rehearsal was to familiarize battalion leaders with the environment and potential tasks prior to any possible deployment to the KFOR area of operations in 2011. Also, on 24 May 2011, KFOR conducted a joint field training exercise with EULEX at Gate 31.

8. On 18 June 2011, KFOR formalized the handover of 19 kilometres of border responsibility along the border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[1] to the Kosovo Border and Boundary Police.

New tasks of NATO

9. During the reporting period, the Kosovo Security Force considerably enhanced its main operational performance, always within its mandate. KSF now has approximately 2,200 active members, nearly 85 per cent of its authorized ceiling, with 8 per cent comprising ethnic minorities and 4.7 per cent of whom are females.

10. At the beginning of the reporting period, the recruitment campaign for the active KSF component concluded. A total of 4,580 applications were received, of which 224 were from female candidates and 148 were from ethnic minorities. On 7 June 2011, the final selection board was held, in order to select 250 new members. A total of 396 applicants were invited to attend the final selection process. The first 150 successful candidates started training on 14 June 2011, with the remaining successful applicants starting in October 2011.

11. The start of the demining season during the reporting period also marked the first year KSF is conducting explosive ordnance disposal emergency response operations in conjunction with humanitarian demining operations in Kosovo. There are approximately 110 known or suspected sites in Kosovo and the KSF Mine Action Centre is closely tracking these locations. On average only five locations are cleared per year.

Summary

12. The overall security situation in Kosovo remained stable during the reporting period. KFOR continues to contribute to a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement in Kosovo.

[1] Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.